

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for enhancing streaming operation in a distributed communication system providing communication links between a plurality of stream servers, a client machine requesting a particular media file, and a stream server selection unit, comprising the steps of:

retrieving a list of stream servers from an Universal Description, Discovery, and Integration (UDDI) directory service,
evaluating the list of stream servers,
selecting one of the stream servers on the list, and
initiating streaming from the selected stream server, wherein the step of evaluating the list of stream servers further comprises the steps of:
retrieving and considering the stream server's capabilities,
retrieving and considering the format(s) in which the media file is presented, and
retrieving and considering preferences from the client.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein ~~the step of evaluating the list of stream servers further includes~~ the step of retrieving and considering the stream server's capabilities further comprises the step of determining operating parameters of each stream server on the list of stream servers, wherein the operating parameters are formed by information about the supported media formats of the stream servers.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of evaluating the list of stream servers further includes the step of retrieving and considering the player availability.

5. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein ~~the step of evaluating the list of stream servers further includes~~ the step of retrieving and considering preferences from the client further comprises the steps of retrieving and considering a list of all available media players at the client, and retrieving and considering a preferred media player.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of evaluating the list of stream servers further includes the step of retrieving and considering the client connectivity.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of evaluating the list of stream servers further includes the step of weighting one or more of the considered parameters.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of determining whether or not the stream server can handle streaming of the requested media file.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of determining whether or not the format of the media has changed.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of determining whether or not the quality of the media is too high for the connection from the selected stream server to the client machine.

11. (Currently Amended) A method for enhancing streaming operation in a distributed communication system providing communication links between a plurality of stream servers, a client machine requesting a particular media file, and a stream server selection unit, comprising the steps of:

retrieving a list of stream servers from an Universal Description, Discovery, and Integration (UDDI) directory service,

evaluating the list of stream servers,

selecting a stream server on the list,

detecting the data transfer rate between the client machine and the distributed communication system,

intercepting a request for streaming a media file if the stream server can not handle the format of the requested streaming media file,

modifying the streaming request by appending preference information for streaming of

the requested media file, and

sending the modified streaming request to the stream server selection unit.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising the initial step of detecting the capabilities of the client machine.

13. (Original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of retrieving preferences predetermined by the user of the client machine.

14. (Original) A device for enhancing streaming operation in a distributed communication system providing communication links between a plurality of stream servers, a client machine requesting a particular media file, and a stream server selection unit, the device being configured to perform a method according to claim 1.

15. (Original) A computer program product stored on a computer usable medium, comprising computer readable program means for causing a computer to perform a method according to claim 1.